WorkGroup: Supportive Housing

STRATEGIC ISSUE:
1. Strengthen infrastructure through education and technical assistance to local nonprofits, public systems and housing providers.

INITIAL RECOMMENDATION(S):
1. Increase the potential for networking between key partners through sharing of "best practice" information. (Monthly meetings with participant access by phone or computer.)   2. Develop a Supportive Housing Institute for developers, service providers, and advocates. The Institute should offer various levels of training and programs on housing development, housing access, services and collaboration.   3. Coordinate training with sessions offered at the Michigan Affordable Housing Conference.

STRATEGIC ISSUE:
2. Assure that services are available and accessible to persons living in supportive housing, including services that allow people to remain in their own homes.

INITIAL RECOMMENDATION(S):
1. Address issue of "funding silos"   2. Identify a dedicated stream of funding for services that allow service delivery to be easily accessible and responsive, 24 hours a day.   3. Develop a resource manual on information regarding successful supportive service models. (Funding, coordination, delivery)   4. Assure that "eviction prevention" services are readily available to tenants.   5. Identify barriers to providing services to tenants of supportive housing, and recommendations to address each one.

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STRATEGIC ISSUE:

3. Increase public support/political will by building an inclusive network of advocates and increasing public awareness. As a result reduce community opposition to supportive housing.

INITIAL RECOMMENDATION(S):

1. Commission a statewide cost-benefit analysis of supportive housing, similar to the New York, New York study.
2. Identify opportunities for collaboration between advocacy organizations.
3. Provide on-site training for planning commissioners, council members and developers on the nature of supportive housing and how to deal with community questions and opposition.
4. Develop a NIMBY guide for developers, planners and service providers.
5. Develop a media guide for consortiums, communities and continuums to use in addressing supportive housing issues.
6. Post the MSHDA program guide on the Web, as well as other relevant resource information.

STRATEGIC ISSUE:

4. Promote collaboration among Supportive Housing partners, including service agencies, developers and property management companies.

INITIAL RECOMMENDATION(S):

1. Provide key partners with information regarding 'best practice" efforts nationwide.
2. Develop opportunities for sharing through "round-table" discussions, workshops and conferences.
3. Identify incentives to encourage housing developers to partner with service organizations.
4. Identify issues that prevent people who are homeless or have a special need from accessing existing affordable housing units.
5. Develop a plan, in collaboration with existing property management companies that will address the need to house people who are homeless or have special needs within existing available housing units.

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STRATEGIC ISSUE:

5. Identify resources and models for financing Supportive Housing.

INITIAL RECOMMENDATION(S):

1. Identify potential funding streams that can be used to finance supportive housing developments.
2. Develop supportive housing financing models that take into consideration the following factors:
    - Size of the project
    - Experience of the project Sponsor
    - Compatibility of funding streams
    - Ability to Leverage
3. Develop a strategy for assisting developers to identify a financing model that would best meet their objective(s).
4. Create avenues of communication and training for new and existing supportive housing developers.

STRATEGIC ISSUE:

6. Develop a common definition of supportive housing that meets the needs of a broad constituency.

INITIAL RECOMMENDATION(S):

Recommend the following definition be approved by MSHDA and appropriate local and state partners:

Supportive housing is a successful, cost-effective combination of affordable housing and access to a wide array of supportive services for its residents in order to help them lead a more stable, meaningful life. Men, women, youth, and families with children may need supportive housing for a variety of reasons including:
- Homeless or at risk of homelessness;
- Poverty, with most earning 20% of median income or below;
- Chronic health conditions that are at least episodically disabling such as mental illness, developmental disabilities, HIV/AIDS, substance use issues, or other substantial barriers to housing stability (e.g. domestic violence, trauma, youth aging out of foster care, people exiting prison or jail who have a history of mental illness or disabilities, people transitioning out of nursing homes, or those having a history of out-of-home placements);
- Inability to obtain or maintain housing;

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Ultimately would not be able to retain stable housing without tightly linked services.